

'Do mermaids exist?' Viewers mistake fictional TV show on the sea creatures for a documentary

Viewers wrote to the National Ocean Service asking about the creatures after *Mermaids: The Body Found* was broadcast

By **Agency staff**

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A US government agency has been forced to deny there is evidence of mermaids after people mistook a fictional TV show for a documentary.

Viewers wrote to the National Ocean Service asking about the creatures after *Mermaids: The Body Found* was broadcast.

The National Ocean Service posted an article last week on its educational website, Ocean Facts.

Images and tales of mermaids – half-human, half-fish – appear in mythology and art from across the world and through history, from Homer's *Odyssey* to the oral lore of the Australian aboriginals, the service wrote.

But it said: "No evidence of aquatic humanoids has ever been found."

National Ocean Service spokeswoman Carol Kavanagh said that at least two people had written to the agency asking about the creatures.

Mermaids: The Body Found, broadcast in May on the Discovery Channel's Animal Planet network, was a work of fiction.

However, its format apparently led some viewers to believe it was a science education show, the Discovery Channel has acknowledged.